

Valles Caldera Trust Draft Framework Rollout Public Meetings

**Walatowa Visitor's Center, Jemez
April 22, 2004**

NOTES

The first VCT public meeting for the Draft Framework Document was held at the Walatowa Visitors Center on April 22, 2004. The meeting was attended by 17 members of the public, along with several Board members and staff. Toby Herzlich facilitated the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to:

- present and gather feedback on the Draft Framework document
- engage in dialogue between the Valles Caldera Trust and the public
- outline the process and timeline for finalizing the Framework and moving to the next planning steps

Tracy Hephner welcomed the group and introduced Board and staff members. Toby Herzlich presented the objectives and agenda for the meeting. Gary Ziehe presented a 20-minute slide show as a basis of understanding around the Trust's work to date and the Framework document. Following this introduction, participants met in small groups with Board and staff to talk about specific topics. These discussions were a combination of getting questions answered and sharing feedback and ideas about the material in the Framework document.

After the roundtable discussions, participants were invited to share general comments. They were encouraged to speak to the group about anything they wanted to emphasize, or messages that they wanted the Board to strongly consider. These comments are presented below first, with the table summaries following. Comments have been re-organized so that feedback regarding the draft Framework is presented first:

Participant Feedback on the Draft Framework and other Issues

- The meticulous approach to the Framework is good – keep working on it until it is right. This document will serve as a reference for ensuring that future activities are on the right track.
- The Framework needs a heavier emphasis on early occupation and pre-history. Meet with the Pueblos prior to final publication. Obtain Tribal authorization of information that can be and should be communicated in this document.
- Continue to emphasize livestock and the “working ranch” approach. Ranching should be presented as an educational and cultural value. Consider public access around the cattle roundup.

- Build more specificity into the Framework by creating sidebars around the Goals and questions . In chapter 9, pull out 3-4 specific points for each resource and activity, e.g., population goals for the elk herd.
- The history of the Preserve as presented in the Framework should start before 1821 (p.39). Consider starting with geologic history or at least around 8000 BP. The Board should conduct interviews with Pueblo elders and the Hispanic community to gather more data about the early uses of the Preserve.
- Articulate a commitment to do financial projections of 2020 self-sufficiency around programs (e.g. hiking program).
- Prioritize educational opportunities. Focus on programs with youth groups, 4H, schools, and the development of educational facilities on the Preserve.
- The caring that has gone into this work and the progress made over three years is greatly appreciated. Also appreciated is the caution showed in moving forward with public access and economic development. The Trust has been approachable and fair.
- Another viewpoint is concern that caution is perceived as exclusiveness. How can the Trust be more welcoming? More programs like the free trail are encouraged. Better publicity about available and affordable access would help. Consider opportunities for access as an educational experience, accompanying a researcher, herder, etc. Integrate access and education/research.
- We all need to work together. Open up the line of communication with local communities. Make it easier to collaborate and find information. Clearly publicize available hours, activities, prices. Reach beyond the website for other means to provide information.
- Put Jemez Springs on the image of any published maps, especially in brochures for the public
- Use the Walatowa Visitors Center as a “gateway” to the Preserve. If Los Alamos is the “front door,” have Jemez be the “back door.”
- Work harder on outreach. Go to communities and groups that are interested. Invite them in a welcoming way, clearly expressing, “we need your help!”
- Consider archaeology before establishing any trails
- Tribal elders need to meet with the new Board members to educate them about the history and cultural issues around the Preserve, Invite them to the VCNP again for another discussion.

Summaries of Roundtable Discussions with Board members

Vision and Values Table

- Participants agreed that access to the Preserve should be restricted
- Elk herd – Concern about numbers and their affect on Mule Deer. We need to stimulate the mule deer population
- Consider Zoning for activities

- Cultural issues – The Board has been fair and trusting in its relationship with the Pueblos. New members need an opportunity to meet with elders and learn about the history and the elders’ concerns. Consider another formal session with Tribes.
- Concern about access and cost factors
- Concern about emphasis on using the website for all communications
- How will the Trust achieve financial sustainability?
- Examine different ways for public involvement

Programs and Priorities Table

- Improve communication with local communities – accurate and timely sharing of information is important
- Collaborate with communities on programs and strategies
- The group gave their blessing on existing programs, but urged the VCT to:
 - improve communication and collaboration
 - protect cultural resources
 - emphasize educational opportunities (school programs and an educational facility)
- Revise the map on recreation brochure to include Jemez Springs and the Pueblo

Financial Self-Sufficiency Table

- Clarify the definition of “self-sufficiency” – what does it mean to the Trust?
- Concern about how to pull this off within the allotted timeframe
- Consider various activities for generating income, such as: filmmaking, science programs, lodging, education, attracting funds from other sources besides congress
- Establish a nonprofit foundation for fundraising
- How to analyze and measure the costs and revenues?
- The Framework needs more detail – outline the financial strategies and allocation of funds among different activities that may create a cumulative impact